

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 NEA-10 EUR-25 SSO-00 NSCE-00

CCO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00 NIC-01 DRC-01 /167 W

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R 171054Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9841

INFO USUN NEW YORK 303

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 5708

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LI, IS

SUBJECT: LIBERIAN STATEMENT ON MIDDLE EAST WAR:

CONVERSATIONS WITH ISRAELI AMBASSADOR

REF: A. MONROVIA 5570

B. MONROVIA 5587

C. MONROVIA 5632

1. ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO LIBERIA (GANOR) CALLED ON ME ON OCTOBER 16 TO SHARE WITH ME HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH SENIOR GOL OFFICIALS CONCERNING LIBERIAN STATEMENT TRANSMITTED IN REF A. DURING PAST WEEK HE HAS HAD CONVERSATIONS WITH OKAI, DEPMIN FOREIGN AFFAIRS; LAFAYETTE MORGAN, MINSTATE W/O PORTFOLIO; FINMIN STEPHEN TOLBERT AND PRESIDENT TOLBERT. (HE SAW PRESIDENT OCTOBER 15 AND STEVE OCTOBER 16 AT THEIR REQUEST. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR HAD SEEN PRESIDENT JUST PRIOR TO GANOR).

2. GANOR LEARNED THAT A Milder STATEMENT HAD BEEN DRAFTED BUT (FOR REASONS NOT EXPLAINED) PRESIDENT TOLBERT, FOLLOWING CONVERSATION WITH GOWON, DECIDED NOT TO USE ORIGINAL STATEMENT. THE STATEMENT THAT WAS ISSUED ON OCTOBER 9, WAS DRAFTED AFTER TOLBERT RETURNED TO EXECUTIVE MANSION FROM SEEING OFF GOWON.
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DRAFTERS WERE DEPFONMIN OKAI, FINMIN TOLBERT, JUSTICEMIN

SIMPSON AND INFOMIN KESSELY.

3. APPARENTLY GOL OBJECTIVE WAS TO REASSURE GANOR THAT STATEMENT DID NOT REFLECT CHANGE IN GOL ATTITUDE TOWARD ISRAEL. (GANOR WAS NOT REASSURED BY THESE CONVERSATIONS.) PRESIDENT TOLBERT SAID HE CONSIDERED LIBERIAN STATEMENT MILD AND CONSONANT WITH PREVIOUS LIBERIAN EXPRESSIONS, SINCE IT FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON ISSUE OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. ALSO INDICATED HIS WILLINGNESS HELP MEDIATE ISRAELI-ARAB DISPUTE. TOLD GANOR HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS EFFORTS TO HELP ACHIEVE PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. SAID HE HAD ALSO SENT PERSONAL MESSAGE TO BREZNEV ALONG LINES HIS MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT NIXON (REFTEL C) APPEALING FOR INTERCESSION FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION CURRENT CONFLICT. EMPHASIZED THAT GOL HAD BEEN UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM UNIDENTIFIED ARABS AND FELLOW AFRICANS, NOT ONLY TAKE STRONG ANTI-ISRAELI PUBLIC STANCE BUT ALSO SEVER RELATIONS. THUS, GOL BELIEVED IT HAD TO ISSUE STATEMENT.

4. STEVE TOOK SIMILAR LINE AS HIS BROTHER BUT, GANOR SAID, EXPRESSED IT IN "MORE PRECISE TERMS." HE, TOO, MAINTAINED LIBERIAN STATEMENT WAS MILD AND THAT GOL WAS FORCED BY OUTSIDE PRESSURE TO ISSUE STATEMENT. CLAIMED GOL WAS "AFRAID" OF ARABS, CHARACTERIZED THEM AS MURDERERS AND ALLEGED ARABS HAVE PLANS TO ASSASSINATE FOUR AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE, ONE OF WHOM IS PRESIDENT TOLBERT. STEVE ASSURED GANOR GOL WOULD NOT SEVER RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

5. GANOR, INTER ALIA, TOLD BOTH TOLBERTS THAT HE CONSIDERED GOL STATEMENT QUITE HARSH AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE IF GOL WAS SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN HELPING BRING PEACE TO MIDDLE EAST. HE POINTED OUT THAT ARABS WOULD TAKE GOL STATEMENT AS PROOF OF LIBERIAN SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSE. GANOR REVIEWED ISRAELI POINTS OF VIEW FOR BOTH TOLBERTS, ALONG LINES PARA 2 REF B. SAYS HE THINKS TOLBERTS NOW UNDERSTAND ISRAELI POSITION BUT HE NOT CERTAIN WHAT, IF ANY, EFFECT THIS WILL HAVE ON GOL IN FUTURE. EXPRESSED VIEW THAT PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S VIEWS RE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT NOT PARTICULARLY FIRM AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE DEPENDING UPON THOUGHTS OF LAST PERSON WITH WHOM HE DISCUSSES SUBJECT.

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6. TOWARD END OF CONVERSATION GANOR TOLD ME THAT ACCORDING TO ISRAELI INTELLIGENCE RUSSIANS HAVE "PROVIDED" THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS AND TYPES OF AIRCRAFT TO THE ARAB COMBATANTS SINCE OCTOBER 6: SYRIA, 125 ANTONOV 12S; EGYPT, 42 ANTONOV 12S AND 16 ANTONOV 22S IRAQ, 17 ANTONOV 12S. HE SAID SEVERAL RUSSIAN SHIPS HAVE CALLED AT PORT OF LATAKIA SINCE OCTOBER 11 DELIVERING MILITARY HEAVY EQUIPMENT. ALSO SAID LATEST OFFICIAL

FIGURES ON ISRAELI CASUALTIES ARE 656 DEAD AND 2000 WOUNDED.
ANOR BELIEVES THESE FIGURES ARE INACCURATE ON THE LOW SIDE.
MANFULL

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